January 31, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. TOLSON
MR. BELMONT
MR. MOHR
MR. SULLIVAN
MR. ROSEN
MR. MALLEY
MR. DE LOACH

Jack Ruby

On January 28, 1964, Mr. J. Lee Rankin, General Counsel of the Presidential Commission headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren, called to see me. He stated that the Commission had asked him to personally see me relative to a matter in which the Commission members were extremely interested.

He stated that there had appeared before the Commission, Mr. Henry M. Wade, a former Special Agent of the Bureau and who is now State District Attorney at Dallas, Texas. He stated Wade advised the Commission that he had left the Bureau with a good record and that, in fact, the Bureau had endeavored to discourage him from leaving. (The summary on Wade, dated January 28, 1964, which is attached, does not substantiate this last statement of Wade as it will be noted that a few months after leaving the Bureau, he sought reinstatement, stating he had made a mistake in resigning, but his request for reinstatement was refused since the Bureau's request for his deferment under the Selective Service Act had already been withdrawn.)

Mr. Rankin stated that Mr. Wade indicated he had left the Bureau with an excellent record and there was no indication of any differences which he might have had with the Bureau.

Mr. Rankin stated that Mr. Wade had advised the Commission that a reporter by the name of Lonnie Hudkins of the Houston Post, Houston, Texas, had printed an article to the effect that Lee Harvey Oswald was a confidential informant or undercover agent for the FBI.

Attachment (with original only)

JMH:EDM (11)

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MAIL ROOM ☐ TELETYPE UNIT ☐

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Mr. Wade further advised the Commission that Lee Harvey Oswald bore the designation of "179" as an informant of the FBI and was paid $200 a month. Apparently the Commission questioned Mr. Wade at some length about this and Mr. Wade further advised the Commission that he, Mr. Wade, while in the Bureau worked in South America for the FBI. I note from the summary attached on Wade that he had an FIS assignment at Quito, Ecuador, during 1942 and 1943. I note further that he was placed on leave without pay on June 1, 1942, and departed from Washington for Quito, Ecuador, on July 29, 1942, arriving in Quito in August, 1942. Effective September 1, 1942, he was placed on the confidential rolls. On May 26, 1943, he submitted his resignation with active duty ceasing at the close of business May 30, 1943.

Mr. Rankin stated that Wade informed the Commission that he was supplied from time to time with various sums of money by the FBI for which he did not have to account nor obtain any receipt from the person or persons to whom he disbursed the money. Mr. Wade stated to the Commission that there was no record of how such funds were spent nor for what purposes they were used by the employee of the FBI to whom the money was given. The Commission, according to Mr. Rankin, concluded that there would be no record of expenditures at Washington, D. C., or any other place in the FBI showing who were employed as confidential informants or the amount paid to them.

Mr. Rankin stated that the Commission was concerned as to how this matter could be resolved, and it was for this reason that they had asked him to see me. He stated the Commission did not desire to initiate an investigation on the outside, such as the calling of Mr. Hudkins, who was the originator of the story and from whom apparently Wade gained his first information as it might appear the Commission was investigating the FBI.

I told Mr. Rankin that I thought the Commission should immediately call Mr. Hudkins before it, place him under oath, and demand of him the source of his information. I stated that I doubted he would give it to them and would either take the position he could not recall from where he obtained it or resort to the claim that a newspaper reporter's sources are privileged.

I told Mr. Rankin further that inasmuch as Mr. Wade's statements were concerned as to how monies were disbursed within the Bureau, off hand I could not speak authoritatively upon the disbursement of funds during the

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operation of our SIS, but I did not believe that there was any such loose administration of our funds as had been indicated. I told Mr. Rankin that I most certainly could state that at least for the last twenty years I knew Mr. Wade's statements would not hold water.

I then outlined to Mr. Rankin generally the procedures that are followed, namely, that every cent is strictly accounted for and the identity of every informant is known to and a record maintained of at the Washington headquarters of the Bureau with indications of the amount of money that is paid to him.

Mr. Rankin inquired of me as to how I would suggest this aspect be developed. I told Mr. Rankin I would be very willing to make an affidavit covering these matters or to appear in person and testify under oath as to what the facts were.

I told Mr. Rankin that Lee Harvey Oswald was never at any time a confidential informant, an undercover agent, or even a source of information for the FBI, and I would like to see that clearly stated on the record of the Commission and I would be willing to so state under oath.

I asked for and received from Mr. Belmont a memorandum as to the handling of funds within the Bureau and it does show that there has been strict accounting of our monies disbursed by the Bureau under SIS as well as subsequent to our withdrawal from SIS operations.

I would like to now have a further analysis of exactly how Wade operated and how monies were paid to him as well as a listing of the funds supplied him and what disposition he made of them. Wade has certainly grossly misinterpreted to the Presidential Commission the manner in which the Bureau operates its informants and it is the desire of the Commission and most certainly that of myself to have this clarified and the record set straight.

Mr. Rankin took occasion while he was here to express appreciation of the cooperation which has been extended by the Bureau to the Presidential Commission and how helpful the Bureau has been to it. I commented to him

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that I had not appreciated the what I interpreted as carping criticism of the Chief Justice when he referred to the Bureau's report originally submitted to the Commission as being a "skeleton" report and his more recent comment that the Commission was engaged in filling in the "gaps" in the investigation. I stated that the report as originally prepared at the direction of the President was intended to be released as promptly as finished by the White House in order to put an end to the many rumors already in circulation which had no basis in fact and that, therefore, the report was in a narrative form unlike the usual reports which are prepared for use in prosecutions. I stated that as he well knew, we had now supplied to the Commission the so-called "raw material" which was the language of the Chief Justice and that these reports totaled over 10,000 pages and that he no doubt would receive some thousand more as the investigation was still continuing.

As soon as I receive the memorandum which I have requested above, I will want them to have the first memorandum which Mr. Belmont has submitted to me combined with such pertinent material as the memorandum which I have now requested into an affidavit which I may sign and have with me when I am called before the Presidential Commission and which I will ask the Commission to make a part of the record in addition to any statement which they request me to make or any answers to questions which they may propound.

Very truly yours,

J. EDGAR HOOVER

John Edgar Hoover
Director

SENT FROM D. O.
TIME 4:30 PM
DATE 2 Feb 64
BY MAE

PLH ITEM #223